

REMARKS

Entry of the foregoing amendments, and favorable reconsideration of the subject application in the light thereof, and in the light of the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-20 are pending in the application, with Claims 1, 2, 6, 10, 15 and 17 being independent, and claims 3-5, 7-9, 11-14, 16 and 18-20 being dependent.

By the present amendment, independent claims 1 and 15 have been cancelled without prejudice and claim 16 has been amended to place the claim in independent form. These amendments have been made in order to place the present application in condition for allowance, consistent with the Office Action.

In the Office Action, claims 1 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Spencer et al (U.S. Patent No. 6,531,107) taken in view of Merkle (*Nanotechnology*, Vol. 11). However, the Examiner indicated that claims 2-14 and 16-20 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected based claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Accordingly, applicants have cancelled claims 1 and 15 without prejudice to Applicants' rights to file a continuation application. Claims 2-14 and 16-20 have been amended to render the claims independent of claims 1 and 15. Therefore, it is submitted that the present application should now be in condition for allowance.

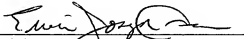
In view of the foregoing, further and favorable action in the form of a Notice of Allowance is believed to be next in order, and such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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